

REMARKS

In the Office Action, the Examiner rejected claims 2, 6-9, and 13-17 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over United States Patent No. 5,212,643 to Yoshida ("Yoshida"), European Patent No. 0 378 271 to De Jong et al. ("De Jong"), United States Patent No. 6,011,494 to Watanabe et al. ("Watanabe"), and United States Patent No. 6,236,912 B1 to Bomans et al. ("Bomans"). Further, claims 16 and 17 were rejected by the Examiner under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Yoshida, De Jong, Watanabe, Bomans, and United States Patent No. 6,012,014 to Koyanagi et al. ("Koyanagi")¹.

In this Amendment, Applicants amend claims 2 and 9 to more appropriately define their invention. Claims 2, 6-9, and 13-17 remain pending.

Applicants amend independent claim 2 to recite "wherein said microcomputer is configured to output a first character or a first symbol representing a first direction of said map in close proximity to or on one of said arcs." Claim 9 includes similar amendments. Support for these amendments can be found in the Applicants' specification, for example, at page 10, lines 16-22.

Applicants traverse the Examiner's rejection of claims 2, 6-9, and 13-15 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Yoshida, De Jong, Watanabe, and Bomans; and the rejection of claims 16 and 17 rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being

¹ The Office Action contains a number of statements reflecting the characterizations of the related art and the claims. Regardless of whether any such statement is identified herein, Applicants decline to automatically subscribe to any statement or characterization in the Office Action.

unpatentable over Yoshida, De Jong, Watanabe, Bomans, and Koyanagi. No *prima facie* case of obviousness has been established.

Regarding the rejection of claims 2, 6-9, and 13-17 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Yoshida, De Jong, Watanabe, and Bomans, none of the references, either alone or in combination, teach or suggest each and every element of amended claims 2 and 9. For example, Yoshida at least fails to teach or suggest an electronic map apparatus including a microcomputer “wherein said microcomputer is configured to output a first character or a first symbol representing a first direction of said map in close proximity to or on one of said arcs,” as recited in amended claim 2. (Emphasis added).

In the Office Action, the Examiner alleges, “Yoshida . . . teaches, in column 3, lines 55-66 and in figure 4, displaying the characters representing a distance from a center point [and] a running direction of the vehicle.” Office Action, pages 3 and 8. (Emphasis added). Thus, while Yoshida incorporates the use of a current position indicating mark 12 to “show[] the current position of the vehicle and the running direction [of the vehicle]” (col. 3, ll. 58 & 59), the mark 12 of Yoshida does not give any indication of a direction of the map. Moreover, the switch patterns 16-19 of Figures 2-4 in Yoshida are for “generat[ing] respective control signals for scrolling the maps to be displayed.” Col. 3, ln. 67 through col. 4, ln. 1. Thus, switch patterns 16-19 do not give an indication of a direction of the map.

Accordingly, Yoshida does not teach or suggest “wherein said microcomputer is configured to output a first character or a first symbol representing a first direction of said map in close proximity to or on one of said arcs,” as recited in amended claim 2.

Method claim 9 also recites “outputting a first character or a first symbol representing a first direction of said map in close proximity to or on one of said arcs.” Therefore, claims 2 and 9 are patentable over Yoshida. (Emphasis added).

Additionally, none of De Jong, Watanabe, Bomans, and Koyanagi teach or suggest the microcomputer of amended claim 2 or the outputting step of amended claim 9. Indeed, the Examiner does not rely on any of these references for teaching arcs, representing an “equidistant curve”, let alone “a first character or a first symbol representing a first direction of said map in close proximity to or on . . . [an] arc[],” as recited in amended claim 2 and similarly recited in amended claim 9. Accordingly, these additional references do not overcome the above-noted deficiencies of Yoshida. Moreover, claims 6-8 and 13-17 are allowable over these applied references at least due to their corresponding dependence from claims 2 and 9.

Moreover, Applicants also submit that there is no suggestion or motivation to combine the teachings of Yoshida with De Jong, Watanabe, or Koyanagi as suggested by the Examiner. In particular, “[t]he mere fact that references can be combined or modified does not render the resultant combination obvious unless the prior art also suggests the desirability of the combination.” MPEP § 2143.01(III), *citing In re Mills*, 916 F.2d 680, 16 USPQ2d 1430 (Fed. Cir. 1990), emphasis in original. In Yoshida, reference numerals 13a to 13c are disclosed to indicate distances relative to a scale indication pattern. (See col. 4., ll. 12-27, and Figs. 2-4). Since Yoshida does not teach displaying a map in perspective view, as conceded by the Examiner (see Office Action at page 4), the reference numerals 13a to 13c allow a user of a such a road map to judge distances on the map. A perspective view, however, does not require reference

numerals to allow a user to perceive a distance between points, since the object of a perspective view map is to allow a user to perceive distances. Thus, there would be no motivation or suggestion to combine the perspective views of De Jong, Wantanabe, and Koyanagi with Yoshida, since reference numerals 13a to 13c already provide a user the ability to perceive distances between points.

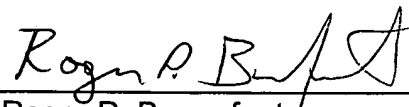
In view of the foregoing remarks, Applicants submit that this claimed invention, as amended, is neither anticipated nor rendered obvious in view of the prior art references cited against this application. Applicants therefore request the entry of this Amendment, the Examiner's reconsideration of the application, and the timely allowance of the pending claims.

Please grant any extensions of time required to enter this response and charge any additional required fees to our deposit account 06-0916.

Respectfully submitted,

FINNEGAN, HENDERSON, FARABOW,
GARRETT & DUNNER, L.L.P.

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By: 

Roger P. Bonenfant
Reg. No. 58,030